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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/457,201	12/06/1999	TERRY S. DAVISON	CB-7-1	7410

21394 7590 03/06/2002
ARTROCARE CORPORATION
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EXAMINER

CASLER, BRIAN L

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

3763

DATE MAILED: 03/06/2002

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	CH
	09/457,201	DAVISON ET AL.	
Examiner	Art Unit		
	Manuel Mendez	3763	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on _____.
- 2a) This action is **FINAL**. 2b) This action is non-final.
- 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) Claim(s) 1-36 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) Claim(s) 15-17 is/are allowed.
- 6) Claim(s) 1-14, 18, 19 and 27-36 is/are rejected.
- 7) Claim(s) 20-26 is/are objected to.
- 8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) approved b) disapproved by the Examiner.
If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 - a) All
 - b) Some *
 - c) None of:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
 - a) The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- 1) Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) _____.
- 4) Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s) _____.
- 5) Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) Other: _____

SUPPLEMENTAL DETAILED ACTION

The examiner of record has carefully reviewed the official office action dated August 28, 2001. It appears that said office action corresponds to Application Number 09/586,295 and was sent in error. Accordingly, this office action will reset the time and will examine claims 1-36.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

Claims 1-14 and 27-35 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. In claims 1, 27, 33, and 34, applicant discloses the step of **“positioning an active electrode adjacent to or in contact with tissue in the presence of electrically conductive fluid”**. However, none of the elements of the claim disclose or suggest a means to infuse electrically conductive fluid into the body. Therefore, since there is no limitation that suggests that said conductive fluid is infused into the body, the claim broadness infers that said conductive fluid is a natural fluid within the body.

Based on the specification of this application, the fluid is infused into the body by elements of the apparatus. Therefore, the claim should disclose or suggest elements in conformity with the specification.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

Claim 18 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Roos. The Roos patent discloses an electro surgical device having a shaft with a proximal end, a distal end and one low resistivity electrode at the distal end of the shaft; a return electrode, and one connector coupled to the active electrode for connecting the active electrode to a high frequency power supply.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 19 and 36 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Roos in view of Webster, Jr. The Roos patent does not disclose the use of platinum electrodes. However, the use of platinum electrodes in electro surgical applications is conventional as evidenced by the teachings of Webster, Jr. The Webster, Jr. patent discloses a slit tip electrode catheter having ring electrodes (21) constructed of platinum. Accordingly, for a person of ordinary skill in the art, the use of platinum electrodes should be considered an obvious design alternative.

Double Patenting

The nonstatutory double patenting rejection is based on a judicially created doctrine grounded in public policy (a policy reflected in the statute) so as to prevent the unjustified or improper timewise extension of the "right to exclude" granted by a patent and to prevent possible harassment by multiple assignees. See *In re Goodman*, 11 F.3d 1046, 29 USPQ2d 2010 (Fed. Cir. 1993); *In re Longi*, 759 F.2d 887, 225 USPQ 645 (Fed. Cir. 1985); *In re Van Ornum*, 686 F.2d 937, 214 USPQ 761 (CCPA 1982); *In re Vogel*, 422 F.2d 438, 164 USPQ 619 (CCPA 1970); and, *In re Thorington*, 418 F.2d 528, 163 USPQ 644 (CCPA 1969).

A timely filed terminal disclaimer in compliance with 37 CFR 1.321(c) may be used to overcome an actual or provisional rejection based on a nonstatutory double patenting ground provided the conflicting application or patent is shown to be commonly owned with this application. See 37 CFR 1.130(b).

Effective January 1, 1994, a registered attorney or agent of record may sign a terminal disclaimer. A terminal disclaimer signed by the assignee must fully comply with 37 CFR 3.73(b).

Claims 1-17 and 27-35 are rejected under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1-22 of U.S. Patent No. 6,149,620. Although the conflicting claims are not identical, they are not patentably distinct from each other.

Claims 18-26 and 36 are rejected under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1-38 of U.S. Patent No. 5,871,469. Although the conflicting claims are not identical, they are not patentably distinct from each other.

Allowable Subject Matter

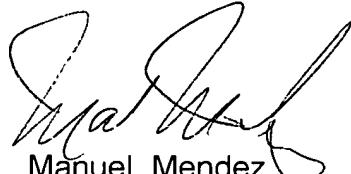
Claims 15-17 are allowable over the prior art of record.

Claims 20-26 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Claims 1, 27, 33, and 34 would be allowable if rewritten or amended to overcome the rejection(s) under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, set forth in this Office action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Manuel Mendez whose telephone number is 703-308-2221. The examiner can normally be reached on 0730-1800 hrs.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Mr. Brian Casler be reached on 703-308-3552. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are 703-305-3590 for regular communications and 703-305-3590 for After Final communications.



Manuel Mendez
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 3763

February 28, 2002